Noise pollution

@*342. SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that nearly 44 million people in India are suffering from deafness of varying degrees and that their number is likely to go up if timely steps are not taken to check noise pollution in the country; and

(b) if so, what remedial steps Government propose to take in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR): (a) and (b) *No country-wide data is available to* indicate the exact extent of hearing impairment. A multi-centric sample study done (1977—1980) by the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) indicated that the prevalence of hearing impairment in the areas and samples studied were 10.7 per cent in rural population and 6.8 per cent in urban population. The studies done by ICMR further revealed that in urban areas there was a definite increase in the prevalence of hearing impairment in those persons working in noisy environments for more than 10 years.

The Department of Environment have recently set up a Committee to look in the present status of noise pollution in the country and to suggest the possible remedial measures. In the meanwhile, the Indian Standards Institution has already formulated certain standards for abatement of noises in town planning, industrial activities and building construction.

SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Sir, has the Government conducted a survey of residential areas in Delhi and other metropolitan cities in India which have the maximum noise pollution, especially during the night time? If so the areas in Delhi which have such noise pollution and the cause of this pollution?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, a pilot survey has been conducted under the auspices of the Post-Graduate Institute, Madras, N.P.A. Delhi and an organisation called Soclean, a Bombay-based voluntary organisation. I will not be able to give the exact areas in the metropolitan cities covered by the study. But the study has established that in certain areas of the cities, especially during the peak-hour traffic time, the noise level is more than the reasonable level of 85 decibel (A). Also there are other studies which have established on nepies between prolonged exposure to such noise and hearing impairment.

SHRI K. VASUDEVA PANICKER: Does the Government propose to take any steps such as enforcing speed limits of vehicles during the nights and also to increase the silence zones in the cities? If not, what other steps has the Government taken to check this threat?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the control of noise pollution is attempted to be enforced by the Centre and the State Governments through eight steps or methods: Augmentation of civic regulations; promotion of civic conscisusness; strict enforcement of the Motor Vehicles Act relating to the use of car horns; selection of silent zones; controlling indiscriminate use of loud-speakers; restriction of noisy trades; restriction of traffic in residential localities; enforcement of ISI standards. As it stands now, there is no comprehensive insolation or comprehensive strategy for action to control noise pollution. But the nodal Ministry the Department of Environment has set up a committee on Noise Pollution and the terms of reference of the Committee include studying the present status of the various legislations and their effective implementation. And as soon as the recommendations of this Committee are received, we have been told by the Department of Environment, an integrated package of measures will be initiated by the Government for the control of noise pollution.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, according to a survey conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences, we are told that the noise level of certain busy traffic roads in Delhi is 95 decibels, and there is a high incident

*Previously Starred Question 162 transferred from the 6th March, 1986.

noise-induced hearing loss and other impairments, for instance, acoustic trauma and like tinnitus which means ringing in ears. And I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to what steps are being taken for helping the industrial workers. In the Workmen's (Compensation) Act, there is a provision for some compensation only in case of total deafness, whereas for certain other impairment or loss of a limb or any part there of the body there is a provision for compensation. And I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether it is under the consideration of the Government to provide for compensation for varying degrees of deafness also.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It must be answered by the Labour Minister. Now, Mr. Gopalsamy.

SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: First part he can answer, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please answer the first part.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the hon. Member is correct to the extent that some of the studies indicate that some areas in Delhi like Darya Ganj and Karol Bagh have special high level of noise pollution.

SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, a survey conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has revealed that the average noise level of the country's metropolitan cities is more than twice the prescribed international limit. Also a recent study in five Southern cities by Prof. Kamaswaran of the Post-Graduate School of Basic Medical Sciences shows that a large number of industrial workers are suffering from noise induced hearing loss. One out of every four workers working in the automobile and oil mill and other industries in Madras, Coimbatore and Madurai suffer from this particular NI disease. Whereas in Britain, Sir, they are getting compensation—in the year 1970 alone, one lakh workers had got compensation in Britain—but it is not so in India. May I know from the Minister what steps he is going to take to protect the welfare of the workers, particularly the workers working in these industries? Would he also consider banning this air-horn fitted in trucks, lorries and buses which is producing the noise, damaging the eardrum particularly because of the air-horn? Will you consider the suggestion to ban this?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister give a brief answer.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the National Institute of Occupational Health, Ahmedabad, had conducted some studies in relation to noise pollution in factories and have made several recommendations. Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that the Factories (Amendment) Act, 1976 included noise-induced hearing loss as a notificable disease entitled to compensation.

SHRI J. K. JAIN: Sir, what about the noise pollution in the House? Members are worried about the noise pollution outside (*Interruptions*).

MR. CHAIRMAN: That will be controlled by the Chairman.

SHRI P. N. SUKUL: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a matter of common knowledge that the worst kind of noise pollution takes place in our country at the time of elections when hundreds of loud-speakers are used simultaneously in the city. And some elections are always taking place somewhere in the country like municipal elections, or corporation elections or Assembly elections or by-elections. So, I would like to know if the Government is considering any measures to prevent and regulate this kind of noise pollution also.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, almost all the States in the country have several pieces of legislation like. The Police Act. The Control of Noises Act, Controlling the loud-speakers etc., which are sufficient to regulate this type of noise from the loud-speakers.

श्री कैलाशपति मिश्र : सभापति महोदय, स्पीच ग्रौर हियरिंग डिफेक्ट के लिए मैसूर सरकार ने एक इंस्टीट्यूट चलाया है । ग्राई०एम०सी करने के बाद

पांच साल की ट्रेनिंग होती है । हर साल वहां से बीस पैथालोजिस्ट और आडियोलोजिस्ट निकल रहे हैं, लेकिन उनके लिए कोई पोस्ट क्रिएट करने की व्यवस्था नहीं हो रही है ।

क्या मंत्री महोदय कोई ऐसा नियम बनायेंगे और राज्य सरकारों को भी विवश करेंगे कि जहां कहीं मेडिकल कालेज हैं, उसमें स्पीच एण्ड हियरिंग के पैथालोजिस्ट और आडियोलोजिस्ट के लिए पोस्ट मस्ट है, तब वह रेकोग्नाईज होगा ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you any proposal like that?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, it is a general question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think you want notice for that.

श्री कैलाशपति मिश्र : सभापति महोदय, यह इसी से संबंधित है ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: I only translated into Parliamentary language. He wants notice. He has not got the information. You give notice. Yes, Mr. Thangabalu.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, I shall certainly look into the complaints of the hon. Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He will look into it.

SHRI THANGABALU: Sir what steps have been taken to identify factories which are producing loud noise in the country, particularly in Tamil Nadu. Secondly, what preventive steps the Government contemplates to take periodically like medical check-up of the industrial workers? May I know the replies to these two questions from the hon. Minister?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the Indian Standards Institution have laid down clear guidelines for factories in relation to noise levels. As regards the second part of the question, it is a part of the ESI scheme.

श्री सत्य प्रकाश मालवीय : मान्यवर, पर्यावरण विभाग ने एक समिति गठित की है । तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि वह समिति कब गठित की गई और इसके सदस्य कौन-कौन है और इस समिति को अपनी अंतिम रिपोर्ट देने के लिए कब तक कहा गया है ?

SHRI J. K. JAIN: Sir, *Pariyavaran* does not come under this.

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: Sir, the Committee consists of nine members. Dr. A. K *Ganguly* is the Chairman.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : वह रिपोर्ट कब तक आयेगी ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: When will the report be ready, have you any idea?

SHRI S. KRISHNA KUMAR: It is not indicated. It is dealt with by the Department of Environment We do not have further the details

MR. CHAIRMAN: We have had enough noise on this question We will now move to the next question. Question No. 343.

Testing and Quality Control Facilities for Drugs Manufactured by Private Companies

†*343. SHRIMATI MONIKA DAS:
SHRIMATI MAIMOONA SULTAN:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of drugs manufacturers do not have testing and quality control facilities with them;

(b) what is the number of drug manufacturing companies which do not possess such facilities;

(c) whether Government have testing laboratories where the drugs can be tested before they are formulated by such companies;

†The Question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Monika Das.